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JAPAN

BY

JOHN FINNEMORE

WITH TWELVE FULL-PAGE ILLUSTRATIONS
IN COLOUR

BY

ELLA DU CANE

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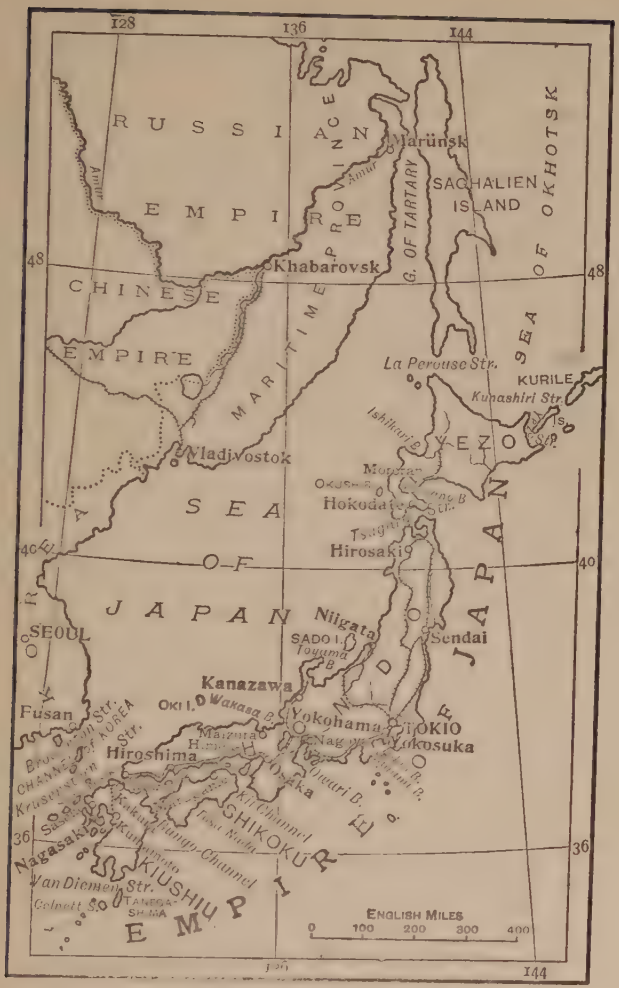

SKETCH-MAP OF JAPAN.

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JAPAN

CHAPTER I

THE LAND OF THE RISING SUN

FAR away from our land, on the other side of the world, lies a group of islands which form the kingdom of Japan. The word "Japan" means the "Land of the Rising Sun," and it is certainly a good name for a country of the Far East, the land of sunrise.

The flag of Japan, too, is painted with a rising sun which sheds its beams on every hand, and this flag is now for ever famous, so great and wonderful have been the victories in which it has been borne triumphant over Russian arms.

In some ways the Japanese are fond of comparing themselves with their English friends and allies. They point out that Japan is a cluster of islands off the coast of Asia, as Britain is a cluster of islands off the coast of Europe. They have proved themselves, like the English, brave and clever on the sea, while their troops have fought as nobly as British soldiers on the land. They

are fond of calling themselves the "English of the East," and say that their land is the "Britain of the Pacific."

The rise of Japan in becoming one of the Great Powers of the world has been very sudden and wonderful. Fifty years ago Japan lay hidden from the world; she forbade strangers to visit the country, and very little was known of her people and her customs.

Her navy then consisted of a few wooden junks; to-day she has a fleet of splendid ironclads, handled by men who know their duties as well as English seamen. Her army consisted of troops armed with two swords and carrying bows and arrows; to-day her troops are the admiration of the world, armed with the most modern weapons, and, as foes, to be dreaded by the most powerful nations.

Fifty years ago Japan was in the purely feudal stage. Her great native Princes were called Daimios. Each had a strong castle and a private army of his own. There were ceaseless feuds between these Princes and constant fighting between their armies of samurai, as their followers were called. Japan was like England at the time of our War of the Roses: family quarrels were fought out in pitched battle. All that has now gone. The Daimios have become private gentlemen; the armies of samurai have been disbanded, and Japan is ruled and managed just like a European country, with judges, and policemen, and law-courts, after the model of Western lands.

When the Japanese decided to come out and take their

place among the great nations of the world, they did not adopt any half-measures; they simply came out once and for all. They threw themselves into the stream of modern inventions and movements with a will. They have built railways and set up telegraph and telephone lines. They have erected banks and warehouses, mills and factories. They have built bridges and improved roads. They have law-courts and a Parliament, to which the members are elected by the people, and newspapers flourish everywhere.

Japan is a very beautiful country. It is full of fine mountains, with rivers leaping down the steep slopes and dashing over the rocks in snowy waterfalls. At the foot of the hills are rich plains and valleys, well watered by the streams which rush down from the hills. But the mountains are so many and the plains are so few that only a small part of the land can be used for growing crops, and this makes Japan poor. Its climate is not unlike ours in Great Britain, but the summer is hotter, and the winter is in some parts very cold. Many of the mountains are volcanoes. Some of these are still active, and earthquakes often take place. Sometimes these earthquakes do terrible harm. The great earthquake of 1871 killed 10,000 people, injured 20,000, and destroyed 130,000 houses.

The highest mountain of Japan also is the most beautiful, and it is greatly beloved by the Japanese, who regard it as a sacred height. Its name is Fujisan, or Fusi-Yama, and it stands near the sea and the

capital city of Tokyo. It is of most beautiful shape, an almost perfect cone, and it springs nearly 13,000 feet into the air. From the sea it forms a most superb and majestic sight. Long before a glimpse can be caught of the shore and the city, the traveller sees the lofty peak, crowned with a glittering crest of snow, rising in lonely majesty, with no hint of the land on which it rests. The Japanese have a great love of natural beauty, and they adore Fujisan. Their artists are never tired of painting it, and pictures of it are to be found in the most distant parts of the land.

CHAPTER II

BOYS AND GIRLS IN JAPAN

In no country in the world do children have a happier childhood than in Japan. Their parents are devoted to them, and the children are always good. This seems a great deal to say, but it is quite true. Japanese boys and girls behave as quietly and with as much composure as grown-up men and women. From the first moment that it can understand anything, a Japanese baby is taught to control its feelings. If it is in pain or sad, it is not to cry or to pull an ugly face; that would not be nice for other people to hear or see. If it is very merry or happy, it is not to laugh too loudly or to make too much noise; that would be vulgar. So

the Japanese boy or girl grows up very quiet, very gentle, and very polite, with a smile for everything and everybody.

While they are little they have plenty of play and fun when they are not in school. In both towns and villages the streets are the playground, and here they play ball, or battledore and shuttlecock, or fly kites.

Almost every little girl has a baby brother or sister strapped on her back, for babies are never carried in the arms in Japan except by the nurses of very wealthy people. The baby is fastened on its mother's or its sister's shoulders by a shawl, and that serves it for both cot and cradle. The little girl does not lose a single scrap of her play because of the baby. She runs here and there, striking with her battledore, or racing after her friends, and the baby swings to and fro on her shoulders, its little head wobbling from side to side as if it were going to tumble off. But it is perfectly content, and either watches the game with its sharp little black eyes, or goes calmly off to sleep.

In the form of their dress both boys and girls appear alike, and, more than that, they are dressed exactly like their parents. There is no child's dress in Japan. The garments are smaller, to fit the small wearers—that is all.

The main article of dress is a loose gown, called a kimono. Under the outer kimono is an inner kimono, and the garments are girt about the body with a large sash, called an obi. The obi is the pride of a Japanese

girl's heart. If her parents are rich, it will be of shining costly silk or rich brocade or cloth of gold; if her parents are poor, they will make an effort to get her one as handsome as their means will allow. Next to her obi, she prides herself on the ornaments which decorate her black hair—fine hairpins, with heads of tortoiseshell or coral or lacquer, and hair-combs, all most beautifully carved.

A boy's obi is more for practical use, and is not of such splendour as his sister's. When he is very small, his clothes are of yellow, while his sister's are of red. At the age of five he puts on the hakama, and then he is a very proud boy. The hakama is a kind of trousers made of silk, and is worn by men instead of an under-kimono. At five years old a boy is taken to the temple to thank the gods who have protected him thus far; and as he struts along, and hears with joy his hakama rustling its stiff new silk beneath his kimono, he feels himself a man indeed, and that his babyhood of yesterday is left far behind.

Upon the feet are worn the tabi—thick white socks, which may be called foot-gloves, for there are separate divisions for the toes.

These serve both as stockings outside the house and slippers inside, for no boots are worn in a Japanese house. When a Japanese walks out, he slips his feet into high wooden clogs, and when he comes home he kicks off the clogs at the door, and enters his home in tabi alone. The reason for this we shall hear

later on. In Japanese clothes there are no pockets. Whatever they need to carry with them is tucked into the sash or into the sleeves of the kimono. The latter are often very long, and afford ample room for the odds and ends one usually carries in the pocket.

But fine kimonos and rich obis are for the wealthy Japanese; the poor cannot afford them, and dress very simply. The coolie—the Japanese working man—goes almost naked in the warm weather, wearing only a pair of short cotton trousers, until he catches sight of a policeman, when he slips on his blue cotton coat, for the police have orders to see that he dresses himself properly. His wife wears a cotton kimono, and the pair of them can dress themselves handsomely—for coolies—from head to foot for a sum of 45 sen, which, taking the sen at a halfpenny, amounts to 1s. 10½d. in our money.

CHAPTER III

BOYS AND GIRLS IN JAPAN (*continued*)

When Japanese boys and girls go to school, they make very low bows to their teacher and draw in the breath with a buzzing sound. This is a sign of deep respect, and the teacher returns their politeness by making low bows to them. Then the children sit down and begin to learn their lessons.

Their books are very odd-looking affairs to us. Not only are they printed in very large characters, but they seem quite upside down. To find the first page you turn to the end of the book, and you read it backwards to the front page. Again, you do not read from left to right, as in our fashion, but from right to left. Nor is this all: for the lines do not run across the page, but up and down. Altogether, a Japanese book is at first a very puzzling affair. When the writing lesson comes, the children have no pens; they use brushes instead. They dip their brushes in the ink, and paint the words one under the other, beginning at the top right-hand corner and finishing at the bottom left-hand corner. If they have an address to write on an envelope, they turn that upside down and begin with the name of the country and finish with the name of the person—England, London, Kensington Gardens, Brown John Mr.

But Japanese children have quite as many things to learn at home as at school. At school they learn arithmetic, geography, history, and so on, just as children do in England, but their manners and their conduct towards other people are carefully drilled into them by their parents. The art of behaving yourself towards others is by no means an easy thing to learn in Japan. It is not merely a matter of good-feeling, gentleness, and politeness, as we understand it, but there is a whole complicated system of behaviour: how many bows to make, and how they should be made. There

THE WRITING LESSON PAGE 8

are different forms of salutation to superiors, equals, and inferiors. Different ranks of life have their own ways of performing certain actions, and it is said that a girl's rank may easily be known merely by the way in which she hands a cup of tea to a guest. From the earliest years the children are trained in these observances, and they never make a mistake.

The Japanese baby is taught how to walk, how to bow, how to kneel and touch the floor with its forehead in the presence of a superior, and how to get up again; and all is done in the most graceful manner and without disturbing a single fold in its kimono.

A child is taught very carefully how to wait on people, how to enter the room, how to carry a tray or bowl at the right height, and, above all, how to offer a cup or plate in the most dainty and correct style. One writer speaks of going into a Japanese shop to buy some articles he wanted. The master, the mistress, the children, all bent down before him. There was a two-year-old baby boy asleep on his sister's back, and he, too, was awakened and called upon to pay his respects to the foreign gentleman. He woke without a start or a cry, understood at once what was required of him, was set on his feet, and then proceeded to make his bows and to touch the ground with his little forehead, just as exactly as his elder relatives. This done, he was restored once more to the shawl, and was asleep again in a moment.

The art of arranging flowers and ornaments is

another important branch of a girl's home education. Everything in a Japanese room is carefully arranged so that it shall be in harmony with its surroundings. The arrangement of a bunch of flowers in a fine porcelain jar is a matter of much thought and care. Children are trained how to arrange blossoms and boughs so that the most beautiful effect may be gained, and in many Japanese houses may be found books which contain rules and diagrams intended to help them in gaining this power of skilful arrangement. This feeling for taste and beauty is common to all Japanese, even the poorest. A well-known artist says:

"Perhaps, however, one of the most curious experiences I had of the native artistic instinct of Japan occurred in this way: I had got a number of fan-holders, and was busying myself one afternoon arranging them upon the walls. My little Japanese servant-boy was in the room, and as I went on with my work I caught an expression on his face from time to time which showed me that he was not overpleased with my performance. After a while, as this dissatisfied expression seemed to deepen, I asked him what the matter was. Then he frankly confessed that he did not like the way in which I was arranging my fan-holders. 'Why did you not tell me so at once?' I asked. 'You are an artist from England,' he replied, 'and it was not for me to speak.' However, I persuaded him to arrange the fan-holders himself after his own taste, and I must say that I received

a remarkable lesson. The task took him about two hours—placing, arranging, adjusting; and when he had finished, the result was simply beautiful. That wall was a perfect picture: every fan-holder seemed to be exactly in its right place, and it looked as if the alteration of a single one would affect and disintegrate the whole scheme. I accepted the lesson with due humility, and remained more than ever convinced that the Japanese are what they have justly claimed to be—an essentially artistic people, instinct with living art."

CHAPTER IV

THE JAPANESE BOY

A Japanese boy is the monarch of the household. Japan is thoroughly Eastern in the position which it gives to women. The boy, and afterwards the man, holds absolute rule over sister or wife. It is true that the upper classes in Japan are beginning to take a wider view of such matters. Women of wealthy families are well educated, wear Western dress, and copy Western manners. They sit at table with their husbands, enter a room or a carriage before them, and are treated as English women are treated by English men. But in the middle and lower classes the old state of affairs still remains: the woman is a servant pure and simple. It is said that even among the greatest families the old

customs are still observed in private. The great lady who is treated in her Western dress just as her Western sister is treated takes pride in waiting on her husband when they return to kimono and obi, just as her grandmother did.

The importance of the male in Japan arises from the religious customs of the country. The chief of the latter is ancestor-worship. The ancestors of a family form its household gods; but only the male ancestors are worshipped: no offerings are ever laid on the shelf of the household gods before an ancestress. Property, too, passes chiefly in the male line, and every Japanese father is eager to have a son who shall continue the worship of his ancestors, and to whom his property may descend.

Thus, the birth of a son is received with great joy in a Japanese household; though, on the other hand, we must not think that a girl is ill-treated, or even destroyed, as sometimes happens in China. Not at all; she is loved and petted just as much as her brother, but she is not regarded as so important to the family line.

At the age of three the Japanese boy is taken to the temple to give thanks to the gods. Again, at the age of five, he goes to the temple, once more to return thanks. Now he is wearing the hakama, the manly garment, and begins to feel himself quite a man. From this age onwards the Japanese boy among the wealthier classes is kept busily at work in school until he is

ready to go to the University, but among the poorer classes he often begins to work for his living.

The clever work executed by most tiny children is a matter of wonder and surprise to all European travellers. Little boys are found binding books, making paper lanterns and painting them, making porcelain cups, winding grass ropes which are hung along the house-fronts for the first week of the year to prevent evil spirits from entering, weaving mats to spread over the floors, and at a hundred other occupations. It is very amusing to watch the practice of the little boys who are going to be dentists. In Japan the dentist of the people fetches out an aching tooth with thumb and finger, and will pluck it out as surely as any tool can do the work, so his pupils learn their trade by trying to pull nails out of a board. They begin with tin-tacks, and go on until they can, with thumb and finger, pluck out a nail firmly driven into the wood.

Luckily for them, they often get a holiday. The Japanese have many festivals, when parents and children drop their work to go to some famous garden or temple for a day's pleasure. Then there is the great boys' festival, the Feast of Flags, held on the fifth day of the fifth month. Of this festival we shall speak again.

Every Japanese boy is taught that he owes the strictest duty to his parents and to his Emperor. These duties come before all others in Japanese eyes. Whatever else he may neglect, he never forgets these obligations. From infancy he is familiar with stories

in which children are represented as doing the most extraordinary things and undergoing the greatest hardships in order to serve their parents. There is one famous old book called "Twenty-four Paragons of Filial Virtue." It gives instances of the doings of good sons, and is very popular in every Japanese household.

Professor Chamberlain, the great authority on Japan, quotes some of these instances, and they seem to us rather absurd. He says: "One of the paragons had a cruel stepmother who was very fond of fish. Never grumbling at her harsh treatment of him, he lay down naked on the frozen surface of the lake. The warmth of his body melted a hole in the ice, at which two carp came up to breathe. These he caught and set before his stepmother. Another paragon, though of tender years and having a delicate skin, insisted on sleeping uncovered at night, in order that the mosquitoes should fasten on him alone, and allow his parents to slumber undisturbed.

"A third, who was very poor, determined to bury his own child alive in order to have more food wherewith to support his aged mother, but was rewarded by Heaven with the discovery of a vessel filled with gold, off which the whole family lived happily ever after. But the drollest of all is the story of Roraishi. This paragon, though seventy years old, used to dress in baby's clothes and sprawl about upon the floor. His object was to delude his parents, who were really over

ninety years of age, into the idea that they could not be so very old, after all, seeing that they still had such a childlike son."

His duty to his Emperor the Japanese takes very seriously, for it includes his duty to his country. He considers that his life belongs to his country, and he is not only willing, but proud, to give it in her defence. This was seen to the full in the late war with Russia. Time and again a Japanese regiment was ordered to go to certain death. Not a man questioned the order, not a man dreamed for an instant of disobedience. Forward went the line, until every man had been smitten down, and the last brave throat had shouted its last shrill "Banzai!" This was the result of teaching every boy in Japan that the most glorious thing that can happen to him is to die for his Emperor and his native land.

CHAPTER V

THE JAPANESE GIRL

The word 'obedience' has a large part in the life of a Japanese boy; it is the whole life of a Japanese girl. From her babyhood she is taught the duty of obeying some one or other among her relations. There is an old book studied in every Japanese household and learned by heart by every Japanese girl, called "Onra-

Dai-Gaku"—that is, the "Greater Learning for Women." It is a code of morals for girls and women, and it starts by saying that every woman owes three obediences: first, while unmarried, to her father; second, when married, to her husband and the elders of his family; third, when a widow, to her son.

Up to the age of three the Japanese girl baby has her head shaved in various fancy patterns, but after three years old the hair is allowed to grow to its natural length. Up to the age of seven she wears a narrow obi of soft silk, the sash of infancy; but at seven years old she puts on the stiff wide obi, tied with a huge bow, and her dress from that moment is womanly in every detail. She is now a musume, or moosme, the Japanese girl, one of the merriest, brightest little creatures in the world. She is never big, for when at her full height she will be about four feet eight inches tall, and a Japanese woman of five feet high is a giantess.

This is her time to wear gay, bright colours, for as a married woman she must dress very soberly. A party of moosmes tripping along to a feast or a fair looks like a bed of brilliant flowers set in motion. They wear kimonos of rich silks and bright shades, kimonos of vermilion and gold, of pink, of blue, of white, decorated with lovely designs of apple-blossom, of silk crape in luminous greens and golden browns, every shade of the rainbow being employed, but all in harmony and perfect taste. If a shower comes on and

GOING TO THE TEMPLE. *Chapter XVI.*

they tuck up their gaily-coloured and embroidered kimonos, they look like a bed of poppies, for each shows a glowing scarlet under-kimono, or petticoat.

Not only is this the time for the Japanese girl to be gaily dressed, but it is her time to visit fairs and temples, and to enjoy the gaieties which may fall in her way: for when she marries, the gates which lead to the ways of pleasure are closed against her for a long time. The duties of a Japanese wife keep her strictly at home, until the golden day dawns when her son marries and she has a daughter-in-law upon whom she may thrust all the cares of the household. Then once more she can go to temples and theatres, fairs and festivals, while another drudges in her stead.

Marriage is early in Japan. A girl marries at sixteen or seventeen, and to be unmarried at twenty is accounted a great misfortune. At marriage she completely severs herself from her own relations, and joins her husband's household. This is shown in a very striking fashion by the bride wearing a white kimono, the colour of mourning; and more, when she has left her father's house, fires of purification are lighted, just as if a dead body had been borne to the grave. This is to signify that henceforward the bride is dead to her old home, and her whole life must now be spent in the service of her husband and his relations.

The wedding rites are very simple. There is no public function, as in England, and no religious ceremony; the chief feature is that the bride and bride-

groom drink three times in turn from three cups, each cup having two spouts. These cups are filled with saké, the national strong drink of Japan, a kind of beer made from rice. This drinking is supposed to typify that henceforth they will share each other's joys and sorrows, and this sipping of saké constitutes the marriage ceremony.

The young wife now must bid farewell to her fine clothes and her merry-making. She wears garments of a soft dove colour, or greys or fawns, quiet shades, but often of great charm. She has now to rise first in the morning, to open the shutters which have closed the house for the night, for this is a duty she may not leave to the servants. If her husband's father and mother dwell in the same house, she must consider it an honour to supply all their wants, and she is expected to become a perfect slave to her mother-in-law. It is not uncommon for a meek little wife, who has obeyed every one, to become a perfect tyrant as a mother-in-law, ordering her son's wife right and left, and making the younger woman's life a sheer misery. The mother-in-law has escaped from the land of bondage. It is no longer her duty to rise at dawn and open the house; she can lie in bed, and be waited upon by the young wife; she is free to go here and there, and she does not let her chances slip; she begins once more to thoroughly enjoy life.

It may be doubted, however, whether these conditions will hold their own against the flood of Western

customs and Western views which has begun to flow into Japan. At present the deeply-seated ideas which rule home-life are but little shaken in the main, but it is very likely that the modern Japanese girl will revolt against this spending of the best years of her life as an upper and unpaid servant to her husband's friends and relations. But at the present moment, for great sections of Japanese society, the old ways still stand, and stand firmly.

It was formerly the custom for a woman to make herself as ugly as possible when she was married. This was to show that she wished to draw no attention from anyone outside her own home. As a rule she blackened her teeth, which gave her a hideous appearance when she smiled. This custom is now dying out, though plenty of women with blackened teeth are still to be seen.

Should a Japanese wife become a widow, she is expected to show her grief by her desolate appearance. She shaves her head, and wears garments of the most mournful look. It has been said that a Japanese girl has the look of a bird of Paradise, the Japanese wife of a dove, and the Japanese widow of a crow.

CHAPTER VI

IN THE HOUSE

A JAPANESE house is one of the simplest buildings in the world. Its main features are the roof of tiles or thatch, and the posts which support the latter. By day the walls are of oiled paper; by night they are formed of wooden shutters, neither very thick nor very strong. As a rule, the house is of but one story, and its flimsiness comes from two reasons, both very good ones.

The first is that Japan is a home of earthquakes, and when an earthquake starts to rock the land and topple the houses about the peoples' ears, then a tall, strong house of stone or brick would be both dangerous in its fall and very expensive to put up again. The second is that Japan is a land of fires. The people are very careless. They use cheap lamps and still cheaper petroleum. A lamp explodes or gets knocked over; the oiled paper walls burst into a blaze; the blaze spreads right and left, and sweeps away a few streets, or a suburb of a city, or a whole village. The Jap takes this very calmly. He gets a few posts, puts the same tiles up again for a roof, or makes a new thatch, and, with a few paper screens and shutters, there stands his house again.

A house among the poorer sort of Japanese consists

of one large room in the daytime. At night it is formed into as many bedrooms as its owner requires. Along the floor, which is raised about a foot from the ground, and along the roof run a number of grooves, lengthways and crossways. Frames covered with paper, called shoji, slide along these grooves and form the wall between chamber and chamber. The front of the house is, as a rule, open to the street, but if the owners wish for privacy they slide a paper screen into position. At night wooden shutters, called amado, cover the screens. Each shutter is held in place by the next, and the last shutter is fastened by a wooden bolt.

The Japanese are very fond of fresh air and sunshine. Unless the day is too wet or stormy, the front of the house always stands open. If the sun is too strong a curtain is hung across for shade, and very often this curtain bears a huge white symbol representing his name, just as an Englishman puts his name on a brass plate on his front-door. The furniture in these houses is very simple. The floor is covered with thick mats, which serve for chairs and bed, as people both sit and sleep on them. For table a low stool suffices, and for a young couple to set up housekeeping in Japan is a very simple matter. As Mrs. Bishop, the well-known writer, remarks:

"Among the strong reasons for deprecating the adoption of foreign houses, furniture, and modes of living by the Japanese, is that the expense of living would be so largely increased as to render early

marriages impossible. At present the requirements of a young couple in the poorer classes are: a bare matted room (capable or not of division), two wooden pillows, a few cotton futons (quilts), and a sliding panel, behind which to conceal them in the daytime, a wooden rice bucket and ladle, a wooden wash-bowl, an iron kettle, a hibachi (warming and cooking stove), a tray or two, a teapot or two, two lacquer rice-bowls, a dinner box, a few china cups, a few towels, a bamboo switch for sweeping, a tabako-bon (apparatus for tobacco-smoking), an iron pot, and a few shelves let into a recess, all of which can be purchased for something under £2."

These young people would, however, have everything quite comfortable about them, and housekeeping can be set up at a still lower figure, if necessary. Excellent authorities say, and give particulars to prove, that a coolie household may be established in full running order for 5½ yen—that is, somewhere about a sovereign.

In better-class houses the same simplicity prevails, though the building may be of costly materials, with posts and ceilings of ebony inlaid with gold, and floors of rare polished woods. The screens (shoji) still separate the rooms; the shutters (amado) enclose it at night. There are neither doors nor passages. When you wish to pass from one room to the next you slide back one of the shoji, and shut it after you. So you go from room to room until you reach the one

of which you are in search. The shoji are often beautifully painted, and in each room is hung a kakemono (a wall picture, a painting finely executed on a strip of silk). A favourite subject is a branch of blossoming cherry, and this, painted upon white silk, gives an effect of wonderful freshness and beauty.

There is no chimney, for a Japanese house knows nothing of a fireplace. The simple cooking is done over a stove burning charcoal, the fumes of which wander through the house and disperse through the hundred openings afforded by the loosely-fitting paper walls. To keep warm in cold weather the Japanese hug to themselves and hang over smaller stoves, called hibachi, metal vessels containing a handful of smouldering charcoal.

In the rooms there are neither tables nor chairs. The floor is covered with most beautiful mats, as white as snow and as soft as a cushion, for they are often a couple of inches thick. They are woven of fine straw, and on these the Japanese sit, with their feet tucked away under them. At dinner-time small, low tables are brought in, and when the meal is finished, the tables are taken away again. Chairs are never used, and the Japanese who wishes to follow Western ways has to practise carefully how to sit on a chair, just as we should have to practise how to sit on our feet as he does at home.

When bedtime comes, there is no change of room. The sitting-room by day becomes the bedroom by

night. A couple of wooden pillows and some quilts are fetched from a cupboard; the quilts are spread on the floor, the pillows are placed in position, and the bed is ready. The pillows would strike us as most uncomfortable affairs. They are mere wooden neck-rests, and European travellers who have tried them declare that it is like trying to go to sleep with your head hanging over a wooden door-scraper.

As they both sit and sleep on their matting-covered floors, we now see why the Japanese never wear any boots or clogs in the house. To do so would make their beautiful and spotless mats dirty; so all shoes are left at the door, and they walk about the house in the tabi, the thick glove-like socks.

CHAPTER VII

IN THE HOUSE (*continued*)

Even supposing that a well-to-do Japanese has a good deal of native furniture—such as beautifully painted screens, handsome vases, tables of ebony inlaid with gold or with fancy woods, and so forth—yet he does not keep them in the house. He stores them away in a special building, and a servant runs and fetches whatever may be wanted. When the article has served its purpose, it is taken back again.

This building is called a godown. It is built of

A JAPANESE HOUSE. *Chapters VI. and VII.*

cement, is painted black, and bears the owner's monogram in a huge white design. It is considered to be fireproof, though it is not always so, and is meant to preserve the family treasures in case of one of the frequent fires. It may be stored with a great variety of furniture and ornaments, but very few see the light at one time.

The Japanese does not fill his house with all the decorations he may own, and live with them constantly. If he has a number of beautiful porcelain jars and vases, he has one out at one time, another at another. A certain vase goes with a certain screen, and every time a change is made, the daughters of the house receive new lessons in the art of placing the articles and decking them with flowers and boughs of blossom in order to gain the most beautiful effect. If a visitor be present in the house, the guest-chamber will be decorated afresh every day, each design showing some new and unexpected beauty in screen, or flower-decked vase, or painted kakemono. There is one vase which is always carefully supplied with freshly-cut boughs or flowers. This is the vase which stands before the tokonoma. The tokonoma is a very quaint feature of a Japanese house. It means a place in which to lay a bed, and, in theory, is a guest-chamber in which to lodge the Mikado, the Japanese Emperor. So loyal are the Japanese that every house is supposed to contain a room ready for the Emperor in case he should stay at the door and need a night's lodging. The Emperor,

of course, never comes, and so the tokonoma is no more than a name.

Usually it is a recess a few feet long and a few inches wide, and over it hangs the finest kakemono that the house can afford, and in front of it is a vase whose flowers are arranged in a traditional form which has a certain allegorical meaning.

At night a Japanese room is lighted by a candle fixed in a large square paper lantern, the latter placed on a lacquer stand. The light is very dim, and many are now replacing it with ordinary European lamps. Unluckily they buy the very commonest and cheapest of these, and so in consequence accidents and fires are numerous.

Among the coolies of Japan, the people who fill the back streets of the large towns with long rows of tiny houses, the process of "moving house" is absolutely literal. They do not merely carry off their furniture—that would be simple enough—but they swing up the house too, carry it off, set their furniture in it again, and resume their contented family life. It is not at all an uncommon thing to meet a pair thus engaged in shifting their abode. The man is marching along with a building of lath and paper, not much bigger than a bathing-machine, swung on his shoulders, while his wife trudges behind him with two or three big bundles tied up in blue cloth. He carries the house, and she the furniture. Within a few hours they will be comfortably settled in the new street to which their needs or their fancies call them.

CHAPTER VIII

A JAPANESE DAY

THE first person astir in a Japanese household is the mistress of the house. She rises from the quilts on the floor which form her bed and puts out the lamp, which has been burning all night. No Japanese sleeps without an andon, a tall paper lamp, in which a dim light burns. Next she unlocks the amado, the wooden shutters, and calls the servants.

Now the breakfast-table must be set out. In one way this is very simple, for there is no cloth to spread, for tablecloths are unknown, and when enough rice has been boiled and enough tea has been made, the breakfast is ready. But there is one point upon which she must be very careful. The lacquer rice-bowls and the chopsticks must be set in their proper order, according to the importance of each person in the family. The slightest mistake in arranging the position at a meal of any member of the family or of a guest under the roof would be a matter of the deepest disgrace. Etiquette is the tyrant of Japan. A slip in the manner of serving the food is a thousand times more important in Japanese eyes than the quality of the food itself. A hostess might serve burned rice and the most shocking tea, but if it were handed round in correct form, there would be nothing more to be said; but to serve a

twice-honourable guest before a thrice-honourable guest—ah! that would be truly dreadful, a blot never to be wiped off the family escutcheon.

After breakfast the master of the house will go about his business. If the day is fine the wife has his straw sandals ready for him; if it is wet she gets his high wooden clogs and his umbrella of oiled paper. Then she and the servants escort him to the door and speed his departure with many low bows, rubbing their knees together—the latter is a sign of deep respect—and calling good wishes after him.

It may seem odd to us that the servants should accompany their mistress on such an errand, but the servants in Japan are not like other servants: they are as much a part of the family as the children of the house. Domestic service in Japan is a most honourable calling, and ranks far higher than trade. A domestic servant who married a tradesman would be considered as going down a step in the social scale. In Japan trade has been left until lately to the lower classes of the population, and tradespeople have ranked with coolies and labourers.

This importance of domestic servants arises from two reasons: First, the old custom which compels the mistress of the house, even if she be of the highest rank, to serve her husband and children herself, and also to wait on her parents-in-law, has the effect of raising domestic service to a high and honourable level. Second, many Japanese servants are of good birth and

excellent family. Only a generation ago their fathers were samurai, followers of some great Prince, a Daimio, and members of his clan. In the feudal days of Japan, so recently past, the position of the samurai was exactly the same as the clansmen of a Highland chief, say at the time of the "Forty-Five."

The Daimio, the Japanese chief, had a great estate and vast revenues, counted in measures of rice; one Daimio had as much as 1,000,000 koku of rice, the koku being a weight of about 132 pounds. But out of these revenues he had to maintain his clan, his samurai, the members of his private army. The samurai clansmen were the exact counterparts of Highlanders. The poorest considered himself a gentleman and a member of his chief's family; he held trade and handicrafts in the utmost disdain: he lived only for war and the defence of his lord. But he regarded service in his lord's household as a high honour, and thus all service was made honourable. When the feudal system came to an end, when the Daimios retired into private life, and the samurai were disbanded, then the latter and their families found that they must work for their own support, and great numbers entered domestic service.

Boys and girls who are meant for servants have to go through a course of training in etiquette, quite apart from the training they receive in their duties. This training is intended to maintain the proper distance between employer and servant, while, in a sense, allow-

ing them to be perfectly familiar. The Japanese servant bows low and kneels to her mistress, and addresses her always in the tone of voice used by an inferior to a superior, yet she will join in a conversation between her mistress and a caller, and laugh with the rest at any joke which is made.

It sounds difficult to believe that servants do not become too forward under such conditions, but they never do. Their perfect taste and good breeding forbid that they should pass over a certain line where familiarity would go too far. The position of a servant in Japan is shown by the fact that, though her master or mistress will speak to her as a servant, yet a caller or guest must always use the tone of equality and address her as san (miss). In the absence of the mistress, servants are expected to entertain any callers, and they do this with the perfection of gentle manners and exquisite politeness. A lady writer says:

"I remember once being very much at sea when I was taken to pay a call on a Japanese lady of the well-to-do class. Not being able to speak a word of the language, I was unable to follow the conversation which took place between the charming little lady who greeted us at the inner shutters and my friend. She was dressed in the soft grey kimono and obi of a middle-aged woman, and her exquisite manner and gentleness made me feel as heavy as my boots, which I had not been allowed to take off, sounded on the delicate floor-matting compared to her soft white foot-gloves.

"My friend addressed her as san, and seemed to speak to her just as a guest would to her hostess. We had tea on the floor, and my friend chatted pleasantly for some time with the little grey figure, when suddenly the sound of wheels on the gravel outside caught my ears, and the next instant there was the scuffling of many feet along the polished wooden passage which led to the front door, and the eager cry of 'O kaeri! O kaeri!' (honourable return). Our hostess for the time rose from her knees, smiled, and begged us to excuse her honourable rudeness. When she had hurried off to join in the cry of welcome, my friend said, 'Oh, I am glad she has come!'

"'Who has come?' I asked.

"'The lady we came to see,' she said.

"'Then, who was the charming little lady who poured out tea for us?' I asked. My friend smiled.

"'Oh, that was only the housemaid.'"

A man dealing with the same point remarks: "It is very important that a Japanese upper servant should have good manners, for he is expected to have sufficient knowledge of etiquette to entertain his master's guests if his master is out. After rubbing his knees together and hissing and kowtowing (bowing low), he will invite you to take a seat on the floor, or, more correctly speaking, on your heels, with a flat cushion between your knees and the floor to make the ordeal a little less painful. He will then offer you five cups of tea (it is the number of cups that signifies, not the

number of callers), and dropping on his own heels with ease and grace, enter into an affable conversation, humble to a degree, but perfectly familiar, until his master arrives to relieve him. Even after his master has arrived he may stay in the room, and is quite likely to cut into the conversation, and dead certain to laugh at the smallest apology for a joke!"

CHAPTER IX

A JAPANESE DAY (*continued*)

But we must return to our Japanese housewife, who has at present only shown her husband out politely to his business. Now she sees that all the paper screens are removed, so that the whole house becomes, as it were, one great room, and thus is thoroughly aired. The beds are rolled up and put away in cupboards, and the woodwork is carefully rubbed down and polished. Perhaps the flowers in the vases are faded, and it is a long and elaborate performance to rearrange the beautiful sprays and the blossoms brought in from the garden.

Cooking is not by any means so important a matter in her household life as it is in that of her Western sister. If her rice-box is well filled, her tea-caddy well stored, her pickle-jar and store of vegetables in good order, she has little more to think about. "Rice is

OFFERING TEA TO A GUEST. *Chapter VIII.*

the staple food of Japan, and is eaten at every meal by rich or poor, taking the place of our bread. It is of particularly fine quality, and at meals is brought in small bright-looking tubs kept for this exclusive purpose and scrupulously clean ; it is then helped to each individual in small quantities, and steaming hot. The humblest meal is served with nicety, and with the rice various tasty condiments, such as pickles, salted fish, and numerous other dainty little appetizers, are eaten. To moisten the meal, tea without sugar is taken. A hibachi, or charcoal basin, generally occupies the central position, round which the meal is enjoyed, and on the fire of which the teapot is always kept easily boiling."

When the Japanese housekeeper goes to market, she turns her attention, after the rice merchant's, to the fish and vegetable stalls. At the fish-stall nothing that comes out of the sea is overlooked. She buys not only fish, but seaweed, which is a common article of diet. It is eaten raw ; it is also boiled, pickled, or fried ; it is often made into soup. Sea-slugs, cuttle-fish, and other creatures which we consider the mere offal of the sea, are eagerly devoured by the Japanese.

At the vegetable-stall there will be a great variety of things for sale—beans, peas, potatoes, maize, buckwheat, carrots, lettuce, turnips, squash, musk- and water-melons, cucumbers, spinach, garlic, onions, leeks, chillies, capucams (the produce of the egg-plant), and a score of other things, including yellow chrysanthemum blossoms and the roots and seeds of the lotus. The Japanese eat

almost everything that grows, for they delight in dock and ferns, in wild ginger and bamboo shoots, and consider the last a great tit-bit.

But to Europeans the Japanese vegetables seem very tasteless, and the chief of them all is very much disliked by Westerners. This is the famous daikon, the mighty Japanese radish, beloved among the poorer classes in its native land and abhorred by foreigners. It grows to an immense size, being often seen a yard long and as thick as a man's arm. When fresh it is harmless enough, but the Japanese love to pickle it, and Mrs. Bishop remarks :

"It is slightly dried and then pickled in brine, with rice bran. It is very porous, and absorbs a good deal of the pickle in the three months in which it lies in it, and then has a smell so awful that it is difficult to remain in a house in which it is being eaten. It is the worst smell I know of except that of a skunk!"

The pickle-seller's stall must not be forgotten, for the Japanese flavour their rather tasteless food with a wonderful variety of pickles and sauces. The great sauce is soy, made from fermented wheat and beans with salt and vinegar, and at times saké is added to it to heighten its flavour. This sauce is served with many articles of food, and fish are often cooked in it.

When the Japanese housekeeper reaches home again she finds that her servants have finished their simple

duties. Englishwomen always wonder what there is in a Japanese house for servants to do. There are no fires to lay, no furniture to polish and clean, no carpets to sweep, and no linen to wash and mend; so Japanese servants spend much time chatting to each other, or sewing new kimonos together, or playing chess. As a rule, there are many more servants than are necessary to do the work. This is because servants are very cheap. There are always plenty of girls who are ready to fill the lower places if they can obtain food and clothes for their services, and the upper servants only receive small sums, sometimes as low as six or eight shillings a month.

If a servant wishes to leave her employment, she never gives direct notice to her mistress. That would be the height of rudeness. Instead she begs permission to visit her home, or a sick relation, or some one who needs her assistance. Upon the day that she should return a long and elaborate apology for her non-arrival is sent, saying that, most unhappily, she cannot be spared from her home or her post of duty. It is then understood that she has left.

In a similar fashion, no mistress tells a servant that she will not suit. A polite explanation that it will be inconvenient to accept her services at the moment is sent through a third party.

In the evening the whole family, servants included, gather in the main room of the house. The master and mistress sit near the hibachi (the stove) and the

andon (the big paper lantern); the maids glide in and sit at a respectful distance with their sewing, if they have any. There may be conversation, or the master may read aloud from a book of historical romances or fairy stories; but the servants may laugh and chat as freely over joke or story as anyone.

When bed-time arrives the quilts come out of the cupboards, and are spread with due care that no one sleeps with the head to the north, for that is the position in which the dead are laid out, and so is a very unlucky one for the living. Then the little wooden neck-rests, which they use as pillows, are set in their places, and every one goes to bed. The Japanese day is over.

CHAPTER X

JAPANESE GAMES

The children of Japan have many games, and some of these games are shared with them by their fathers and mothers — yes, and by their grandfathers and grandmothers too, for an old man will fly a kite as eagerly as his tiny grandson. The girls play battledore and shuttlecock and bounce balls, and the boys spin tops and make them fight. A top-fight is arranged thus: One boy takes his top, made of hard wood with an iron ring round it, winds it up with

string, and throws it on the ground ; while it is spinning merrily, another boy throws his top in such a way that it spins against the first top and knocks it over. So cleverly are the attacking tops thrown that the first top is often knocked to a distance of several feet. Other games are playing at war with toy weapons, hunting grasshoppers, which are kept in tiny cages of bamboo, and hunting fireflies. The last pastime is followed by Japanese of all ages, and the glittering flies are pursued by night, and struck down by a light fan.

Wherever there is a stream of water, the boys set up toy water-wheels, and these water-wheels drive little mills and machines, which the boys have made for themselves in the cleverest fashion.

Here is a group whose heads are very close together. Let us peep over their shoulders, and see what it is they watch so quietly and earnestly. Ah! this is a favourite trick. A small boy is setting a team of half a dozen beetles to draw a load of rice up a smooth, sloping board. He has made a tiny cart of paper, and filled it with rice. The traces of the cart are made of fine threads of silk, and he fastens the threads of silk to the backs of the beetles with gum.

Now he has his strange team in motion, and the beetles are marching up the board, dragging their load. The tiny faces in the ring of watchers are filled with deep but motionless interest. Not one dreams of stretching out a finger. There is no need to say, "Don't touch!" No one would dream of touching—

that would be very rude. Japanese children manage their own games, without any appeal to their elders. It is not often that a dispute arises, but, should that happen, the question is settled at once by the word of an elder child. The decision is obeyed without a murmur, and the game goes on.

Another game of which children are fond is that of painting sand-pictures on the roadside. A group of children will compete in drawing a sand-picture in the shortest time. Each has four bags of coloured sand—black, red, yellow, and blue—and a bag of white. The white sand is first thrown down in the form of a square; then a handful of black sand is taken, and allowed to run through the fingers to form a quaint outline of a man, or bird, or animal, upon the white ground. Next, the design is finished with the other colours, and very often a most striking effect is obtained by these child artists. "But the most extraordinary and most fascinating thing of all is to watch the performance of a master in sand-pictures. So dexterous and masterly is he that he will dip his hand first into a bag of blue sand and then into one of yellow, allowing the separate streams to trickle out unmixed, and then, with a slight tremble of the hand, these streams will be quickly converted into one thin stream of bright green, relapsing again into the streams of blue and yellow at a moment's notice."

There are many indoor games, and a very great favourite is the game of alphabet cards. This is

played with a number of cards, some of which contain a proverb and some a picture illustrating each proverb. The children sit in a ring, and the cards are dealt to them. One of the children is the reader, and when he calls out a proverb the one who has the picture corresponding to the proverb answers at once and gives up the card. The first one to be rid of his cards is the winner, and the one who holds the last card is the loser. If a boy is the loser, he has a dab of ink or of paint smudged on his face ; if it is a girl, she has a wisp of straw put in her hair. The game is so called because each proverb begins with a letter of the Japanese alphabet.

Japanese children have many holidays and festivals, and they enjoy themselves very much on these joyous occasions. With their beautiful dresses of silk shining in the sun, a crowd of them looks like a great bed of flowers. Mr. Menpes speaks of a merry-making which he saw : "It was a festival for girls under ten, and there were hundreds of children, all with their kimonos tucked up, showing their scarlet petticoats, and looking for all the world like a mass of poppies. . . . Two rows or armies of these girls were placed several yards distant from each other in this long emerald-green field, and in the space between them stood two servants, each holding a long bamboo pole, and suspending from its top a flat, shallow drum, covered with tissue-paper.

"Presently two young men teachers appeared on the

scene, carrying two baskets of small many-coloured balls, which they threw down on the grass between the children and the drums. Then a signal was given, and all the girls started running down the field at full tilt towards one another, pouncing on the balls as they ran, and throwing them with all their force up at the paper drums.

"After a time, when a perfect shower of balls had passed through the tissue drums, quite demolishing them, a shower of coloured papers, miniature lanterns, paper umbrellas, and flags came slowly fluttering down among the children on to their jet-black bobbing heads and into their eager outstretched hands. Never have I seen anything more beautiful than these gay, brightly-clad little people, packed closely together like a cluster of flowers in the brilliant sparkling sunshine, with their pretty upturned faces watching the softly falling rain of coloured toys."

CHAPTER XI

THE FEAST OF DOLLS AND THE FEAST OF FLAGS

On the third day of the third month there is great excitement in every Japanese household which numbers a girl among its domestic treasures: for the Feast of Dolls has come, the great festival for dolls. On this day the most beautiful dolls and dolls' houses are

fetched from the godown, where the family furniture is kept, and are on exhibition for a short time, set out on shelves covered with scarlet cloth.

These dolls are the O-Hina, the honourable dolls. They are kept with the greatest care, and in some families there are dolls which are centuries old. As each doll is dressed exactly in the costume of its age, and is furnished with belongings which represent in miniature the furniture of that age, such a collection has great historic value, and is used to teach the children how their ancestors looked and lived.

There are common dolls for the little girls to play with every day, but these elaborate ones, the honourable dolls, are stored with the greatest care. Many of them are very costly. The doll is not only beautifully made and dressed, but its house is furnished with the most exact imitations of every article of furniture and of every utensil. In wealthy families this toy furniture is made of the rarest gold lacquer, or of solid silver, or of beautiful porcelain. Not a single article, either of state or of usefulness, is missing, and it is the delight of a Japanese girl at the Feast of Dolls to use the tiny utensils of her toy kitchen to prepare an elaborate feast of real food which is set before her honourable dolls.

The beginning of a collection of such dolls is made as soon as a girl is born. Every girl-child is presented with a pair of these dolls, and as time goes on she gathers all the articles which go with them. These

dolls are always her own. When she marries she takes them to her new home.

When the O-Hina Matsuri, the Feast of Dolls, draws near, the Japanese shops begin to be full of the little images used at that time. The poorer are of painted earthenware; the finer are of wood, with clothes of the richest materials. These images, together with tiny bowls, and pots, and stoves, and trays, are used to set off and decorate the surroundings of the Feast of Dolls. They vary very greatly in price. The coolie household may have a set-out which cost a few pence. The O-Hina of a great noble's house will often be worth a fortune, having hundreds of beautifully carved and dressed images to represent the Emperor and Empress and every official of the Japanese Court, with every article used for State functions, and every piece of furniture needed to deck a royal palace. Other sets of O-Hina represent great personages in Japanese history, perhaps a great Daimio and his followers, each figure dressed with strict historical accuracy, and provided with every feature proper to its rank and period.

The great festival for boys comes at the Feast of Flags. This is held on the fifth day of the fifth month. Every one knows when the Feast of Flags is near, for before every house where there are boys a tall post of bamboo is set up. Swinging from the top of each post is the figure of a huge carp, made of brightly coloured paper. If a boy has been born in the house during the

year the carp is made bigger still. The body of the fish is hollow, and when the wind blows into it, it wriggles its fins and tail just like a fish swimming strongly. The Japanese choose the carp because they say it has the power of ascending streams swiftly against the current and of leaping over waterfalls. It is thus supposed to typify a young man breasting the stream of life, and thrusting his way through difficulties to success.

As the boys' day draws near, the shops become full of toys for them. There are images bought for boys as well as for their sisters; but boys' images are those of soldiers, heroes, generals, famous old warriors, wrestlers, and so forth. The old Japanese were a warlike nation, and the toys provided for their sons at the Feast of Flags were helmets, flags, swords, bows and arrows, coats of mail, spears, and the like. The Feast of Flags itself is held on the day sacred to Hachima, the Japanese God of War, and the favourite game on that day is a mimic battle.

The boys divide themselves into two parties, called Heike and Genji. These names represent two great old rival clans of the feudal days. Every Heike carries a red flag on his back, every Genji a white one. Each combatant also wears a helmet, consisting of a kind of earthenware pot. The combat is joined, and the small warriors hack at each other with bamboo swords. A well-directed blow will dash to pieces the earthenware pot, and the wearer is then compelled to own defeat.

That side wins which breaks most pots on its opponents' heads, or captures most flags.

This display of weapons, with blowing of horns and trumpets, serves another purpose also; for on the fifth day of the fifth month the Japanese believe that Oni, an evil-disposed god, comes down from the heavens to devour boys, or to bring great harm to them. But he fears sharp swords, so the long sword-shaped blades of the sweet flag are gathered from the edges of rivers and the sides of swampy rice-fields, and used as decorations. As a Japanese writer says: "Oni fears the sword-blade of the sweet flag, so that its leaves are everywhere. They are upon the festal table; they hang in festoons about the house, and all along the eaves. Boys wear them tied around their heads, with the white scraped fragrant roots projecting like two horns from their foreheads. So, and with the noise of bamboo horns, they frighten away the ogre god. For he fears horned men, and he dares not enter a house where so many swords hang from the eaves."

CHAPTER XII

A FARTHING'S WORTH OF FUN

How would you like to go to a fair with a farthing, a whole farthing, to spend as you pleased? I think I can see some of you turning your noses up, and looking

very scornful. "A farthing, indeed!" you say. "Pray, of what use is a farthing? I wouldn't mind going to a fair with a shilling, or even sixpence, but what could anyone do with a farthing?" Well, in Japan you could do a great deal. We must remember that Japan is a country of tiny wages; many of its workers do not receive more than sixpence a day, and a man who gets a shilling is well off. Tiny earnings mean tiny spendings, and things are arranged on a scale to meet very slender purses.

We will now see what sort of time O Hara San, Miss Blossom, and her brother, Taro San, Master Eldest Son, had at the fair one fine day in Nagasaki. In the morning they sprang up from their quilts full of excited pleasure, for they had been looking forward to this fair for some time. But they did not romp and chatter and show their excitement as English children would do. Their black eyes shone a little more brightly than usual, and that was all.

When they had whipped their rice into their mouths with their little chopsticks, they started for the fair, which was to be held in the grounds of a great temple. Of course, they were dressed in their best clothes. Both had new kimonos, and O Hara San had a very fine obi, which her parents had bought for her by denying themselves many little luxuries. Their father and grandmother went with them, but their mother stayed at home with the baby. Their father wore a newly-washed kimono, but his chief glory was an old bowler

hat which a European gentleman had given to him. It had been much too large for him, but he had neatly taken it in, and now wore it with great pride. When they reached the fair they gave themselves up to its delights with all their hearts. There was so much to do and so much to see. Almost at once O Hara San and Taro were beguiled by a sweetmeat stall.

Each had five rin, and five rin make one farthing, or rather less, but we will call it a farthing for the sake of round figures. One rin apiece was spent here. The stall was in two divisions : one stocked with delicious little bottles of sugar-water, the other with pieces of candy, tinted bright blue and red and green. Miss Blossom went in for a bottle of sugar-water, and her brother for candies. But first he demanded of the candy-seller that he should be allowed to try his luck at the disc. This was a disc having an arrow which could be whirled round, and if the arrow paused opposite a lucky spot an extra piece of candy was added to the purchase. To Taro's great joy, he made a lucky hit, and won the extra piece of candy ; he felt that the fair had begun very well for him.

While they drank sugar-water and munched candy, they wandered along looking at the booths, where all sorts of wonders were to be seen—booths full of conjurers, acrobats, dancers, of women who could stretch their necks to the length of their arms, or thrust their lips up to cover their eyebrows, and a hundred other

curious tricks. The price of admission was one rin each to children, and finally they chose the conjurer's booth, and saw him spout fire from his mouth, swallow a long sword, and finally exhibit a sea-serpent, which appeared to be made of seal-skins tacked together.

When they left the show they came all at once on one of the great delights of a Japanese fair. It was the man with the cooking-stove, round whom children always throng as flies gather about honey. For the fifth part of a farthing you may have the use of his cooking-stove, you may have a piece of dough, or you may have batter with a cup, a spoon, and a dash of soy sauce. You may then abandon yourself to the delights of making a cake for yourself, baking it for yourself, and then eating it yourself, and if you spend a couple of hours over the operation the man will not grumble. As this arrangement combines both the pleasure of making a cake and playing with fire, it is very popular, and we cannot wonder that Taro took a turn, though Miss Blossom did not. She felt herself rather too big to join the swarm of happy urchins round the stove.

While Taro was baking his cake she spent her third rin on a peep-show, where a juggler made little figures of paper and pasteboard dance and perform all kinds of antics. Then they went on again. Each bought one rin's worth of sugared beans, a very favourite sweet-meat ; and these they ate while they waited for their father and grandmother to join them at the door of a

certain theatre where they had agreed to meet. Into this theatre was pouring a stream of people, old and young, men, women, children, and babies, for a great historical play was to be performed, and it would shortly begin. Soon their elders turned up, and their father took their last rin to make up the payment which would admit them.

In they went, and took possession of their place. The floor of the theatre was divided by little partitions, about a foot or so high, into a vast number of tiny squares, like open egg-boxes. In one of these little boxes our friends squatted down on the floor, and the grandmother began to unpack the bundle which she had been carrying. This bundle contained a number of cooking-vessels and an ample supply of rice, for here they meant to stay for some hours to see the play, to eat and drink, and enjoy themselves generally.

The father filled his pipe, lighted it at the hibachi, and began to smoke, as hundreds more were doing all round them. Each box contained a family, and each family had brought its cooking-pots, its food, and its drink; and hawkers of food, of pipes, of tobacco, of saké, and of a score of other things, rambled up and down selling their wares.

When the play began every one paid close attention, for it was a great historical play, and the Japanese go to the theatre and take their children there in order to learn history. There are represented the old wars, the old feuds, the struggle of Daimio against Daimio—in

short, the history of old Japan. When an actor gave pleasure, the audience flung their hats on the stage. These were collected by an attendant, and kept until the owners redeemed them by giving a present. For six hours O Hara San and Taro sat in their little box, laughing, shouting, eating, and drinking, while the play went on. Then it was over, for it was only a short play, at a cheap theatre. "Ah!" said their father, "when I was a boy we had real plays. We used to rise early and be in the theatre by six o'clock in the morning. There we would stay enjoying ourselves until eleven at night. But now the decree of the Government is that no play shall last more than nine hours. It is too little!"

The children quite agreed with him as they helped their grandmother to gather the pots and pans and dishes which were scattered about their box. Then each took the wooden ticket which would secure the shoes which they had left outside with the attendants, and went slowly from the theatre. When they had obtained their shoes and put them on, Miss Blossom and Master Eldest Son strolled slowly homewards through the fair. They had not another rin to spend —their farthing's worth of fun was over.

CHAPTER XIII

KITE-FLYING

About a fortnight after the fair, on a fine windy afternoon, there was a holiday, and Taro, with his father and his younger brother Ito, turned out to fly kites. Some of their neighbours were already at work flying kites from the roofs of the houses or from windows, but our friends wanted more room than that, and went up to a piece of higher ground behind their street. Here they joined a crowd of kite-flyers. Every one was out to-day with his kite, old and young, men of sixty, with yellow, wrinkled faces, down to toddlers of three, who clutched their strings and flew their little kites with as much gravity and staidness as their grandfathers. Before long O Hara San came up with the baby on her back, and he had a bit of string in his tiny fist and a scrap of a kite not much bigger than a man's hand floating a few yards above his head.

But Taro was a proud boy this afternoon. He was about to fly his first big fighting kite. It was made of tough, strong paper, stretched on a bamboo frame five feet square, a kite taller than his own father. The day before Taro had pounded a piece of glass up fine and mixed it with glue. The mixture had been rubbed on the string of his kite for about thirty feet near the kite-end and left to dry. Now, if he could only get this

string to cut sharply across the string of another kite, the latter cord would be severed, and he could proudly claim the vanquished kite as his own.

Kites of every colour and shape hovered in the air above the wide open space. There were square kites of red, yellow, green, blue, every colour of the rainbow; many were decorated with gaily-painted figures of gods, heroes, warriors, and dragons. There were kites in the shape of fish, hawks, eagles, and butterflies. Some had hummers, made of whalebone, which hummed musically in the wind as they rose; and as for fighting kites, they were abroad in squads and battalions. In one place the fight was between single kites; in another a score of men with blue kites met a score with red kites and the kites fluttered, darted, swooped, dived this way, that way, and every way, as they were skilfully moved by the strings pulled from below. Now and again one of them was seen to fall helplessly away and drift down the wind; its string had been cut by some victorious rival, and it had been put out of the battle.

Taro had his kite high up in the air very soon; it flew splendidly, and for some time he was very busy in trying it and learning its ways, for every kite has its own tricks of moving in the air. Then suddenly he saw a great brown eagle sailing towards it. He looked up and saw that a boy named Kanaya was directing the eagle kite towards his own, and that it was a challenge to a fight. Taro accepted at once, and the combat was joined.

Kanaya brought his eagle swiftly over Taro's big square kite, brightly painted in bars of many colours, but Taro let out string and escaped. Then he swung his kite up into the wind and made it swoop on the eagle. But Kanaya was already winding his string swiftly in and had raised his kite out of reach of the swoop. And so they went on for more than an hour, pursuing, escaping, feinting, dodging, until at last the eagle caught a favourable slant of wind and darted down so swiftly that Taro could not escape. The strings crossed, and the upper began to chafe the lower savagely.

Taro tried to work his kite away, but in vain. The eagle string was strong and sharp. At the next moment Taro felt a horrid slackness of his string; no more could he feel the strong, splendid pull of his big kite. There it was, going, falling headlong to the ground. Kanaya had won. Nothing now remained to Taro but to take his beating like a Japanese and a gentleman. With a cheerful smile he made three low bows to his conqueror. Kanaya, with the utmost gravity, returned the bows before he ran away to secure the kite he had won.

Now, there had been a very interested and attentive observer of this battle in Ito, Taro's younger brother. Ito never said a word or moved a muscle of his little brown face when he saw his brother defeated and the big kite seized in triumph by Kanaya. But his black eyes gleamed a little more brightly in their narrow slits as he let out more string and waited for Kanaya to begin to fly again.

Ito had succeeded to the possession of Taro's old kite. It was less than two feet square, but it flew well, and Ito had also anointed his string with the mixture of pounded glass and glue, and was ready for combat. Within ten minutes Kanaya was flying once more, and now he had Taro's kite high in the air. He had put away his own big brown eagle, and was flying the kite he had just won. He had scarcely got it well up when a smaller square kite came darting down upon it from a great height. Ito had entered the lists, and a fresh battle began.

It was even longer and stubborner than the first, for Ito's kite, being much smaller, had much less power in the air; but Ito made up for this by showing the greatest skill in the handling of his kite, and quite a crowd gathered to see the struggle, watching every movement in perfect silence and with the deepest gravity. Suddenly Ito pounced. He caught a favourable gust of wind, and swung his line across Kanaya's with the greatest dexterity. Saw-saw went the line, and at the next moment the great kite went tumbling down the wind, and Kanaya and Ito exchanged the regulation bows. Then the latter looked at his brother without a word, and Taro ran to seize his beloved kite again.

"It is yours now, Ito," said the elder brother, when he came back.

"Oh no," said Ito; "we will each keep our own. I am glad I got it back from Kanaya."

CHAPTER XIV

FAIRY STORIES

When Taro and Ito went home that night with their kites, they were glad to sit down and rest, for they had been running about until they were quite tired. When they had eaten their suppers of rice from their little brown bowls of lacquer, they begged their grandmother to tell them a story, and she told them the famous old story of Momotaro, beloved of every child in Japan. And this is what she told them : Once upon a time an old man and an old woman lived near a river at the foot of a mountain. Every day the old man went to the mountain to cut wood and carry it home, while the old woman went to the river to wash clothes. Now, the old woman was very unhappy because she had no children ; it seemed to her that if she only had a son or a daughter she would be the most fortunate old woman in the world.

Well, one day she was washing the clothes in the river, when she saw something floating down the stream towards her. It proved to be a great pear, and she seized it and carried it home. As she carried it she heard a sound like the cry of a child. She looked right and left, up and down, but no child was to be seen. She heard the cry again, and now she fancied that it came from the big pear. So she cut the

pear open at once, and, to her great surprise and delight, she found that there was a fine baby sitting in the middle of it. She took the child and brought it up, and because he was born in a pear she called him Momotaro.

Momotaro grew up a strong, fine boy, and when he was seventeen years old he started out to seek his fortune. He had made up his mind to attack an island where lived a very dreadful ogre. The old woman gave him plenty of food to eat on the way—corn and rice wrapped in a bamboo-leaf, and many other things—and away he went. He had not gone far when he met a wasp.

"Give me a share of your food, Momotaro," said the wasp, "and I will go with you and help you to overcome the ogre."

"With all my heart," said Momotaro, and he shared his food at once with the wasp.

Soon he met a crab, and the same agreement was made with the crab, and then with a chestnut, and last of all with a millstone.

So now the five companions journeyed on together towards the island of the ogre. When the island was reached they crept up to the house of the ogre, and found that he was not in his room. So they soon made a plan to take advantage of his absence. The chestnut laid itself down in the ash of a charcoal fire which had been burning on the hearth, the crab hid himself in a washing-pan nearly full of water, the wasp settled in

a dusky corner, the millstone climbed on to the roof, and Momotaro hid himself outside.

Before long the ogre came back, and he went to the fire to warm his hands. The chestnut at once cracked in the hot ashes, and threw burning cinders over the ogre's hands. The ogre at once ran to the washing-pan, and thrust his hands into it to cool them. The crab caught his fingers and pinched them till the ogre roared with pain. Snatching his hands out of the pan, the ogre leapt into the dusky corner as a safe place; but the wasp met him and stung him dreadfully. In great fright and misery the ogre tried to run out of the room, but down came the millstone with a crash on his head and killed him at once. So, without any trouble to himself, and by the help of the faithful friends which his kindness had made for him, Momotaro gained possession of the ogre's wealth, and his fortune was made.

Then the grandmother told them of Jizo, the patron saint of travellers and children, the helper of all who are in trouble.

Everywhere by the roadside in Japan is found the figure of Jizo. Sometimes a figure of noble height, carved in stone or in the living rock, sometimes no more than a rough carving in wood, he is represented as a priest with kindly face, holding a traveller's staff in his right hand and a globe in his left. He stands upon a lotus-flower, and about his feet there lies a pile of pebbles, to which pile each wayfarer adds a fresh pebble.

And the old grandmother bade the children never pass a figure of Jizo without paying it the tribute of a pebble, for this reason: Every little child who dies, she said, has to pass over So-dzu-kawa, the river of the underworld. Now, on the banks of this river there lives a wicked old hag who catches little children as they try to cross, steals their clothes from them, and sets them to work to help her in her endless task of piling up the stones on the shore of the stream. Jizo helps these poor children, and every one who throws a pebble at the foot of this shrine also takes a share in lightening the labour of some little one down below.

Another favourite story is that of Urashima, the fisher-boy. Urashima was a handsome fisher-boy, who lived near the Sea of Japan, and every day he went out in his boat to catch fish in order to help his parents. But one day Urashima did not return. His mother watched long, but there was no sign of her son's boat coming back to the shore. Day after day passed, and Urashima was mourned as dead. But he was not dead. Out on the sea he had met the Sea-God's daughter, and she had carried him off to a green, sunny land where it was always summer. There they lived for some time in great love and happiness. When it appeared to Urashima that several weeks had passed in this pleasant land, he begged permission of the Princess to return home and see his parents.

"They will be sorrowing for me," he said. "They will fear that I am lost, and drowned at sea."

At last she allowed him to go, and she gave him a casket, but told him to keep it closed.

"As long as you keep it closed," she said, "I shall always be with you, but if you open it you will lose both me and this sunny summer land for ever."

Urashima took the casket, promised to keep it closed, and returned home. But his native village had vanished. There was no sign of any dwelling upon the shore, and not far away there was a town which he had never seen before. In truth, every week that he had spent with the Princess had been a hundred years on earth, and his home and native village had passed away centuries ago, and the place where they had stood had been forgotten. In his despair, he forgot the words of the Princess, and opened the forbidden box. A faint blue mist floated out and spread over the sea, and a wonderful change took place at once in Urashima. From a handsome youth he turned to a feeble and decrepit old man, and then he fell upon the shore and lay there dead. In the box the Princess had shut up all the hours of their happy life, and when they had once escaped he became as other mortals, and old age and death came upon him at a bound.

CHAPTER XV

TEA-HOUSES AND TEMPLES

Tea-houses and temples run together very easily in the Japanese mind, for wherever you find a temple there you also find a tea-house. But tea-houses are not confined to the neighbourhood of temples: they are everywhere. The tea-house is the house of public entertainment in Japan, and varies from the tiny cabin with straw roof, a building which is filled by half a dozen coolies drinking their tea, to large and beautiful structures, with floors and ceilings of polished woods, splendid mats, and tables of ebony and gold.

The tea-house does not sell tea alone. It will lodge you and find you dinners and suppers, and is in country places the Japanese hotel. If tea-houses sold tea and nothing else it is certain that European travellers would be in a very bad way, for there is one point they are all agreed upon, and that is that the tea, as a rule, is quite unpalatable to a Western taste. However, it does not matter in the least whether you drink it or not as long as you pay your money, and the last is no great tax—about three halfpence.

When a traveller steps into a tea-house the girl attendants, the moosmes, gay in their scarlet petticoats, kneel before him, and, if it is an out-of-the-way place, where the old fashions are kept up, place

their foreheads on the matting. Then away they run to fetch the tea. Japanese servants always run when they wish to show respect; to walk would look careless and disrespectful in their eyes. The tea arrives in a small pot on a lacquer tray, with five tiny teacups without handles round the pot. There is no milk or sugar, and the tea is usually a straw-coloured, bitter liquid, very unpleasant to a European taste. But if a cup be raised to the lips and set down, and three sen—a sen is about a halfpenny—laid on the tray, all goes well, and every one is satisfied.

This bringing of tea to a visitor is universal in Japan. It is not only done in a tea-house, where one would expect it, but on every occasion. A friendly call at a private house produces the teacups like magic, and when a customer enters a good shop, business matters are undreamed of until many little cups of tea have been produced; and if the customer has many things to buy and stays a long time, tea is steadily brought forward in relays. If you don't care for your tea plain, you may have it flavoured with salted cherry blossoms, but that is not considered an improvement by the Westerner, who longs for sugar and milk. If you wish to stay for the night at a tea-house, a room is made for you by sliding some paper screens into the wall and ceiling grooves, and a couple of quilts are laid on the floor to form a bed. That is the whole provision made in the way of furniture if you are off the beaten track of tourists: the rest you must provide for yourself.

In the cities the tea-houses of the grander sort are the scenes of splendid entertainments. When a Japanese wishes to give a dinner to his friends he does not ask them to his house; he invites them to a banquet at some famous tea-house. There he provides not only the delicacies which make up a Japanese dinner, but hires dancing girls, called geisha, to amuse the company by their dancing and singing.

A foreigner who is asked to one of these Japanese dinners finds everything very strange and not a little difficult. At the doors of the tea-house his boots are taken off, and he marches across the matting, to do his best to sit on his heels for a few hours. This gives him the cramp, and soon he is reduced to sitting with his back against the wall and his legs stretched out before him. He can manage in this way pretty fairly.

There may be a table before him, or there may not. If there is a table, it will be a tiny affair about a foot high. There will be no tablecloth, no glasses, no knives and forks, no spoons, and no napkin. He will be expected to deal with his food with a pair of chopsticks. When these are set before him, he will see that the two round slips of wood are still joined together. This is to show that they have never been used before. He breaks them apart, and wonders how he is going to get his food into his mouth with two pencils of wood.

The feast begins with tea served by moosmes, who kneel before each guest. Each wears her most beautiful dress, and is girded with a huge and brilliant sash.

After the tea they bring in pretty little white cakes made of bean flour and sugar, and flavoured with honey. The next course is contained in a batch of little dishes, two or three of which are placed before each guest. These contain minced dried fish, sea slugs floating in an evil-smelling sauce, and boiled lotus-seeds. To wash down these dainties a porcelain bottle of saké, rice-beer, is provided.

The unhappy foreigner tastes one dish after the other, finds each one worse than the last, and concludes to wait till the next course. This is composed of a very great dainty, raw, live fish, which one dips in sauce before devouring. Then comes rice, and the chopsticks of the Japanese feasters go to work in marvellous fashion. With their strips of wood or ivory they whip the rice grain into their mouths with wonderful speed and dexterity, but our unlucky foreigner gets one grain into his mouth in five minutes, and is reduced to beg for a spoon.

The next course is of fish soup and boiled fish, and potatoes appear with the fish; but, alas! the fish is most oddly flavoured and the potatoes are sweet; they have been beaten up with sugar into a sort of stiff syrup. Next comes seaweed soup and the coarse evil-smelling daikon radish, served with various pickles and sauces.

Among the other oddments is a dish of nice-looking plums. Our foreigner seizes one and pops it in his mouth. He would be only too glad to pop it out again if he could, for the plum has been soaked in brine, and

tastes like a very salty form of pickle. As he experiments here and there among the wilderness of little lacquer bowls which come forth relay upon relay, he feels inclined to paraphrase the cry of the Ancient Mariner, and murmur: "Victuals, victuals everywhere, and not a scrap to eat!"

When at length the dinner has run its course the geisha, in their beautiful robes of silk and brocade and their splendid sashes, come in to sing and dance. Europeans are soon tired of both performances. The geisha, with her face whitened with powder, and her lips painted a bright red, and her elaborately-dressed hair full of ornaments, sits down to a sort of guitar called a samisen and sings, but her song has no music in it. It is a kind of long-drawn wail, very monotonous and tuneless to European ears. The dancing is a kind of acting in dumb show, and consists of a number of postures, while the movements of the fan take a large share in conveying the dancer's meaning.

When our foreigner starts home from this long and rather fatiguing entertainment, he finds that he has by no means finished with his dinner. On his way to his carriage he will be waylaid by the little moosmes who have waited upon him, and their arms will be filled with flat white wooden boxes. These contain the food that was offered to him and left uneaten, and Japanese etiquette demands that he shall take home with him his share of the scraps of the banquet.

CHAPTER XVI

TEA-HOUSES AND TEMPLES (*continued*)

THE Japanese are very fond of their temples, and visit them constantly. They do this not only to pray to their gods, but to enjoy themselves as well, for the temple grounds are the scene of great fairs and festivals. If you visit a temple on the day of some great function, you will find its steps outside packed with rows upon rows of clogs and umbrellas, placed there by the worshippers inside. You enter, and find the latter seated on the floor, and if the service is not going on at the moment they are smoking and chatting together, and the children are crawling about in the crowd.

When the service is over the worshippers disperse to find a cool spot in the temple grounds to eat their simple meal. In front of the temple stands a wooden arch, called a torii. Sometimes the temple is approached through a whole avenue of them of various sizes. The building is of wood, sometimes small, sometimes very large, and is usually surrounded by booths and tea-houses. At many of the booths may be purchased the figures of the more popular gods. Everywhere may be seen the fat figures of the Seven Gods of Wealth, the deities most beloved in every Japanese household. Then there are the God and Goddess of Rice, who protect the crops, and who are

attended by the figures of foxes quaintly carved in wood or moulded in white plaster. The Goddess of Mercy, with her many hands to help and save, is also a favourite idol.

At another spot you find peep-shows, stalls at which hairpins, paints, and powder-boxes, and a thousand other trifles, are sold; archery galleries, where you may fire twenty arrows at a target for a halfpenny; booths, where acrobats, conjurers, and jugglers are performing, and tea-houses without number, where the faithful are sipping their tea or saké and puffing at their tiny pipes.

The young girls are fond of purchasing sacred beans and peas and rice at a stall set up under the eaves of the temple. With these they feed the temple pigeons, who come swooping down from the great wooden roof, or the sacred white pony with the blue eyes which belongs to the holy place. On the steps sit rows of licensed beggars, who will pray for those who will present them with the tenth part of a farthing. But prayers may also be bought from the priests, prayers written upon a scrap of paper, which scrap is afterwards fastened to the bars of the grating in front of the figure of a god. A favourite god will have many thousand scraps of paper fluttering before it at one time.

Many of the temple gardens are of very great beauty and interest. There can be seen many of the marvels of Japanese gardening—tiny dwarf trees, hundreds of years old, and yet only a few inches high, or tall

shrubberies cut and trained to represent a great junk in full sail, or the figure of a god or hero.

At certain times of the year when the temple orchards are in blossom, great throngs visit them simply to enjoy the delicate beauty of the scene. The plum-blossom appears in February, and the cherry-blossom in April or May. Later in the year the purple iris is followed by the golden chrysanthemum. High and low, all crowd to see the beauty of a vast sweep of lovely blossom. A poor Japanese thinks nothing of walking a hundred miles or more to see some famous orchard or garden in its full flowering splendour.

From his earliest years this love of natural beauty has been a part of his education. As a child he has taken many a trip with his father and mother to admire the acres of plum or cherry blossom in a park or temple-garden; as a man he lays his work aside and goes to see the same spectacle with redoubled delight.

CHAPTER XVII

THE RICKSHAW-MAN

"For his heart is in Japan, with its junks and Fujisan,
And its tea-houses and temples, and the smiling rickshaw-man."

We have heard of Fujisan, the famous mountain; we have talked of tea-houses and temples; and now we must say something about the rickshaw-man or boy,

a very important person indeed in Japan. He is not important because of riches or rank, for, as a rule, he is very poor and of the coolie order; he is important because he is so useful. He is at one and the same time the cabman and the cab-horse of Japan. He waits in the street with his little carriage, and when you jump in he takes hold of the shafts himself and trots away with you at a good speed.

The jin-ri-ki-sha, to give it its full name, means man-power carriage, and is like a big mail-cart or perambulator. There is a hood of oiled paper to pull up for wet weather, a cushion to sit on, a box for parcels under the seat, two tall slight wheels, and a pair of shafts. If the rickshaw-boy is well-to-do in his business, his carriage is gaily lacquered and painted with bright designs, and however poor he may be, there will be some attempt at decoration.

At night every rickshaw is furnished with a pretty paper lantern, circular in form, about eighteen inches long, and painted in gay designs. These look quite charming as they bob here and there through the dusk, their owners racing along with a fare. The rickshaw is as modern as the bicycle. The first one was made less than forty years ago, but they sprang into favour at once, and their popularity grew by leaps and bounds. The fact is that the rickshaw fits Japan as a round peg fits a round hole. In the first place, it opened a new and money-making industry to many thousands of men who had little to do. There were vast numbers of strong,

active young fellows who leapt forward at once to use their strength and endurance in this novel and profitable fashion. Then, the vehicle was suited to Japanese conditions, both in town and country.

In town the streets are so narrow and busy that horse traffic would be dangerous. In fact, in many places a horse is so rare a sight that when one trots along a street a man runs ahead, blowing a horn to warn people to clear out of the way. But the rickshaw-boy dodges through the traffic with his little light carriage, and runs over no one.

Then, in the country the roads are often very narrow, and sometimes very bad—mere tracks between fields of rice. Here the rickshaw is of great service, owing to its light weight and the little room it requires.

As a rule, the rickshaw is drawn by one man and holds one passenger ; but it has often to contain two Japanese, for the pair of them will fit snugly into the space required for one Englishman. If the traveller wishes to go fast, he has two human horses harnessed to his light chariot. Both run in front till a hill is reached, when one drops back to push behind.

Wherever you arrive in Japan, whether by steamer or by train, you will find long rows of rickshaw-boys waiting to be hired. They are all called boys, whatever their age may be. Until a possible passenger comes in sight, the queer little men, many of them under five feet in height, stand beside their rickshaws, smoking their tiny little brass pipes with bowls about half as big as a

thimble. Their clothes are very simple. They wear a very tight pair of short blue drawers and a blue tunic, upon the back of which a huge white crest is painted, the distinguishing mark of each boy. An enormous white hat the size and shape of a huge basin is worn on the head; but if the day becomes very hot the hat is taken off, and a wisp of cloth bound round the forehead to prevent sweat from running into the eyes. As for sunstroke, the rickshaw-boy has no fear of that.

When you step into sight, a score dart forward, dragging their rickshaws after them with one hand and holding the other up to draw your attention, and shouting, "Riksha! Riksha! Riksha!" You choose one, and step in. The human steed springs between the shafts, raises them and tilts you backwards, and then darts off, as if eager to show you his strength and speed, and prove to you what a good choice you have made.

Away bounds the little man, and soon you are bowling along a narrow street where a passage seems impossible, so full is it of boys and girls, men and women, shops and stalls. There may be a side-walk, but then, the shopkeepers have taken that to spread out their wares, or the stallkeepers have set up their little booths there. So the people who want to go along the street, and the boys and girls who want to play in it, are all driven to the middle of the way.

Here and there your rickshaw dodges, working its way through the crowd. Now the man pauses a second lest he should run full-tilt over a group of

gaily-dressed little girls, each with a baby on her back, playing at ball in the road. Half a dozen others are busy with battledores and shuttlecocks, and the gaily-painted toys drop into your carriage, and you are expected to toss them out again to the mites, who will bow very deeply and with the profoundest gravity in return for your politeness; then something flutters over your head, and you see that two boys and an old man are sitting on the roof of a house about as high as a tool-shed, trying to get their kites up. And you say to yourself that it is lucky that there are no horses, for the quietest beast that ever lifted a hoof would bolt here and charge through the whirl and uproar and the rain of dropping shuttlecocks and bouncing balls.

Another fine thing about rickshaw-riding is that no one can call it expensive. While the boy goes, you pay him about sevenpence an hour; while he waits you pay him rather less than twopence-halfpenny an hour, and you can have his services for a whole day for about half a crown. But some of them will try to cheat you in places where foreigners are often met with, and will put a whole twopence an hour on the regular price.

This is very sad, and causes the rickshaw-boy to be looked upon as a tradesman; he is not allowed the honour of being regarded as a servant and the member of an honourable profession—one who puts his master's interests before his own.

But, as a rule, the foreigner who employs the same rickshaw-boy comes to look upon him as a guide, philosopher, and friend. He will tell you where to go and what to do; he knows all the sights, and can tell you all about them. If you go shopping, he will come in and see that you don't get cheated any more than you are bound to be. If you go on an expedition, he will find out the best tea-house to stay at, he will cook for you, wait on you, brush your clothes, put up the paper screens to form your bedroom, take them down again, see that the bill is reasonable, pay it, and fee the servants—in short, he will manage everything, and you have only to admire what you have gone to see.

Wherever you stop on a jaunt, whether it is some famous temple or some lovely park, there is sure to be a coolie's tea-house handy, and he takes the opportunity of refreshing himself. He dives into the well under the seat and fetches out his lacquer box full of rice. He whips the rice into his mouth with chopsticks, and washes it down with the yellow, bitter Japanese tea. Then he sits and smokes his tiny pipe until you are ready to go on.

CHAPTER XVIII

IN THE COUNTRY

THE Japanese farmer is one of the steadiest workers in the world ; he tills his patch of land, day in, day out, with untiring industry. He works seven days a week, for he knows nothing of the Sabbath, and only takes a day off for a fair or a festival when his land is in perfect order and he is waiting for the crop.

Almost the whole of the land is turned over with the spade, and weeds are kept down until the whole country looks like a neatly-kept garden. Many crops are grown, but the chief of them all is rice, and when the rice crop fails, then vast numbers of people in Japan feel the pinch of famine.

In order to grow rice much water is needed, so the fields are flooded from a river or canal near at hand, and the plants are set in the soft mud. This work is carried out by men or women who wade in slush above their knees, and it is a very dirty and toilsome task. The women tuck their kimonos up, and the men cast theirs aside altogether. After planting, this work in deep slush and clinging mud must be repeated three times in order to clear away the water-weeds which grow thickly around the young rice-plants.

When the rice is nearly ripe the water is drawn off and the fields are dried. The fields are of all sizes

PEACH TREES IN BLOSSOM.

and shapes, from a patch of a few square yards up to an acre, and the latter would be considered large. There are no hedges or fences to divide off field from field, for the land is too valuable to permit of such being grown; but the boundaries are well understood, and each farmer knows his own patch.

Another important crop is the plants which are grown for making paper. Paper has a great place in the industries of Japan. It is used everywhere and for almost everything. A Japanese lives in a house largely built of paper, drinks from a paper cup, reads by a paper lantern, writes, of course, on paper, and wraps up his parcels in it, ties up the parcels with paper string, uses a paper pocket-handkerchief, wears a paper cloak and paper shoes and paper hat, holds up a paper umbrella against the sun and the rain, and employs it for a great number of other purposes. He makes more than sixty kinds of paper, and each kind has its own specified use. He can make it so tough that it is almost impossible to tear it, and he can make it waterproof, so that the fiercest rain cannot pass through it.

If your path leads you along the bank of a river you will often see a fisherman at work. He has many ways of catching his prey. He uses a line and hook and the net. In a large stream or pool he may be seen at work with the throwing-net, a clever device.

This net is made in the form of a circle twelve or fourteen feet across, and round the edge of the net

heavy sinkers of lead are fastened. The fisherman folds this net over his arm, and then tosses into the water a ball of boiled rice and barley. The fish gather to eat this bait, and then he throws the net in such a way that it falls quite flat upon the water. The leads sink at once to the bottom, and the net covers the feeding fish in the shape of a dome. A strong cord is fastened to the top of the net, and he begins to haul it up. The leads are drawn together by their own weight, and close the bottom of the net, and the fish are imprisoned.

Sometimes he uses bow and arrows. This he does after putting into the water certain fruit and herbs which are very bitter. The juice of these herbs affects the water and drives the fish to the surface, where they leap about in pain. The fisherman shoots them with an arrow to which a cord is attached, and draws them ashore.

As night falls after a hot day, the people and children of the village near at hand will come down to the water-side on a fire-fly hunt. The tiny gleaming creatures now flash along the surface of river and lake, like a myriad of fairy lanterns flitting through the dusk. They are caught and imprisoned in little silken cages. At the bottom of the cage there is a very small mound of earth in which a millet seed has been planted and has sprung up to the height of an inch or more, and beside the little plant there is a tiny bowl of water. Here the firefly will live for several days, to the delight of the children.

Not far from the river is the village, with a brook running down the middle of its street. This brook serves many purposes. The women kneel beside it with sleeves and kimonos tucked up, washing clothes and vegetables, or dipping buckets in it to get water for baths. There is a loud rattle of wooden hammers at various points, for the stream turns a number of small water-wheels, and these work big wooden hammers which pound up the rice placed in a big stump of a tree hollowed out for a mortar. As you stroll along the village street you see what every one is doing, for the fronts of the houses are all open, and you can see into every corner of each dwelling.

Behind the houses tall bamboos shoot up, and the bamboo is welcome, for it is a tree of many uses. Its wood serves for the framework of houses, and its leaves are often used as thatch. It will make a dish, a box, a plate, a bowl, an oar, a channel for conveying water and a vessel for carrying it, a fishing-rod, a flower-vase, a pipe-stem, a barrel-hoop, a fan, an umbrella, and fifty other things, while young bamboo shoots are eaten and considered a great delicacy.

On fine summer evenings, when the work of the day is over, the villagers gather in the court of the village temple for the odori, the open-air dance. The court is decked with big beautiful paper lanterns, but there is a special one called toro (a light in a basket). The toro is often two feet square by five feet high. On one side of it is the name of the god in

whose temple court the dance is being held, while the other is reserved for some short poem, written by one of the youths of the village. There is keen competition among them for the honour of writing the poem chosen to be inscribed on the toro, and two of these tiny poems run thus :

"I looked upon the cherry that blooms by the fence, down by the woodman's cottage,
And wondered if an untimely snow had fallen upon it."

"Into the evening dew that rolls upon the green blade of the tall-grown grass in Mushashi Meadow
The summer moon comes stealthily and takes up her dwelling."

The young men and maidens dance in a ring, circling round one who stands in the midst, from whom they take both the time and music of the many dances performed at the odori. The dancers are always young and unmarried. The older people sit on the steps of the temple and watch the merry frolic with a smile.

CHAPTER XIX

IN THE COUNTRY (*continued*)

On a wet day in the country the people thatch themselves to keep off the rain. The favourite waterproof of the coolie is a huge cloak made of rice straw, the long ends sticking out. With this and his great

umbrella hat he keeps comfortably dry. Those who do not wear a big hat carry a large oiled paper umbrella, which shelters them well.

There is plenty of wet weather in Japan, particularly in the summer, and then travelling is not very pleasant. The good roads become muddy and soft, and the bad roads become sheer quagmires, in which the coolie pulling the rickshaw is continually losing his straw sandals. These sandals, called waraji, mark out the tracks in every direction, for they soon wear out, and are cast off to litter the wayside in their hundreds. They are quickly and cheaply replaced, however, for almost every roadside house sells them, and a pair may be bought for a sen—something less than a halfpenny.

Not only do the men wear straw shoes, but horses are shod in them also, and a very poor and clumsy arrangement it is. The shoes are thick, and are tied on the horse's feet with straw cords. They wear out so fast that a bunch has to be kept hanging to the saddle for use on the way, and in every village a fresh stock has to be secured, at the cost of a penny per set of four.

The foreign visitor who travels through country places in Japan has to submit to being stared at, but nothing more. The people are so interested in a person who looks so different from themselves that they are never tired of watching him and his ways. But otherwise their unfailing politeness remains. They do not crowd upon him, or, if they should come a little too near, they are soon warned off. An English artist,

Mr. Alfred Parsons, was once sketching in Japan, and the crowd, anxious to see his work, came a little too near his elbow. He says: "The keeper of a little tea-shop hard by, where I took my lunch, noticed that I was worried by the people standing so close to me, and when I arrived next morning I found that he had put up a fence round the place where I worked. It was only a few slender bamboo sticks, with a thin string twisted from one to another, but not a soul attempted to come inside it. They are such an obedient and docile race that a little string stretched across a road is quite enough to close the thoroughfare."

A familiar figure along the Japanese highways and byways is that of the pilgrim going to see some famous shrine, or, most often of all, marching towards Fujisan, the sacred mountain. The Fuji pilgrim may be known by his garb. He is dressed in white, with white kimono, white socks and gaiters, and straw sandals. He wears a great basin-shaped white hat, and has a rush mat over his shoulders to temper the heat of the sun or shed the rain. Round his neck hangs a string of beads and a bell, which tinkles without ceasing as he goes. He carries a little bundle of spare sandals and a staff with an ornament of paper about its end.

His pilgrimage costs him very little. His food is of the simplest, and he gets a bed at a tea-house for a halfpenny, or he lodges with a villager who offers him hospitality. To entertain his guest the villager will fetch his best furniture from the village godown, for in

the country one of these storehouses suffices for a whole hamlet. They are made very large and strong, with many thick coats of mud and plaster on a wooden frame, and with a door of iron or of bronze; then, when the fire, which is sure to come at some time or other, sweeps over the hamlet and leaves it a layer of smoking ashes around the big godown, there are the village treasures still unharmed, and ready to adorn the houses which will spring up again as if by magic.

When bedtime comes, the amado, the wooden shutters, are drawn around the house and securely fastened; for a Japanese dwelling, so open by day, is shut up as tightly as a sealed box by night. Now all is quiet save for the village watchman, whose duty it is to guard against fire and thieves. He marches up and down, beating two pieces of wood together—clop-clop, clop-clop—as he walks. This is to give assurance that he is not asleep himself, but watching over the slumbers of his neighbours, and to let the thieves know that he is looking out for them.

CHAPTER XX

THE POLICEMAN AND THE SOLDIER

The Japanese policeman is, first and foremost, a gentleman. He is a samurai, a man of good family, and therefore deeply respected by the mass of the people. He is often a small man for a Japanese, but though his

height may run from four feet ten to five feet nothing, he is a man of much authority. When the samurai were disbanded, there were very few occupations to which they could turn. They disdained agriculture and trade, but numbers of them became servants, printers, and policemen. This seems an odd mixture of tasks, but there are sound reasons for it.

Many samurai became servants because service is an honourable profession in Japan ; many became printers because the samurai were an educated class, and the only people fitted to deal with the very complicated Japanese alphabet ; and many became policemen because it was a post for which their fighting instinct and their habit of authority well fitted them. Their authority over the people is absolute and unquestioning; and, again, there are sound reasons for this.

Forty years ago the Japanese people could have been divided very sharply into two classes, the ruling and the ruled. The ruling class was formed of the great Princes and the samurai, their followers, about 2,000,000 people in all. The remaining 38,000,000 of the population were the common people, the ruled. Now, in the old days when a Daimio left his castle for a journey, he was borne in a kago, a closed carriage, and was attended by a guard of his samurai. If a common person met the procession, he was expected either to retire quickly from the path or fling himself humbly on his face until the carriage had gone by; if he did not, the samurai whipped out their

THE FEAST OF FLAGS. *Chapter XI.*

long swords and slew him in short order, and not a single word was said about it. This way of dealing with those who did not belong to the two-sworded class made the people very respectful to the samurai, and that respect is now transferred to the police.

The Japanese policeman is also to be respected for his skill in wrestling, and, small as he is, the tallest and most powerful foreigner is quite helpless in his hands. He is thoroughly trained in the art of Japanese wrestling—the jiu-jitsu of which we hear so much nowadays. In this system a trained wrestler can seize his opponent in such a manner that the other man is quite at his mercy, or with a slight impetus he can fling the other about as he pleases. One writer speaks of seeing a very small Japanese policeman arrest a huge, riotous Russian sailor, a man much more than six feet high. It seemed a contest between a giant and a child. The sailor made rush after rush at his tiny opponent, but the policeman stepped nimbly aside, waiting for the right moment to grip his man. At last it came. The sailor made a furious lunge, and the policeman seized him by the wrist. To the astonishment of the onlooker, the sailor flew right over the policeman's head, and fell all in a heap more than a dozen feet away. When he picked himself up, confused and half stunned, the policeman tied a bit of string to his belt and led him away in triumph to the station.

The policeman never has any trouble with his own people; they obey at once and without question. If

a crowd gathers and becomes a nuisance to anyone, it melts as soon as one of the little men in uniform comes along and gives the order to disperse. He may sometimes be seen lecturing a coolie or rickshaw-boy for some misdeed or other. The culprit, his big hat held between his hands, ducks respectfully at every second word, and looks all humility and obedience.

Being an educated man, he has much sympathy with art and artists, and is delighted to help a foreigner who is painting scenes in Japan. Mr. Mortimer Menpes says: "Altogether I found the policeman the most delightful person in the world. When I was painting a shop, if a passer-by chanced to look in at a window, he would see at a glance exactly what I wanted; and I would find that that figure would remain there, looking in at the shop, as still as a statue, until I had finished my painting; the policeman meanwhile strutting up and down the street, delighted to be of help to an artist, looking everywhere but at my work, and directing the entire traffic down another street."

Of the Japanese soldier there is no need for us to say much here, since the world has so lately been ringing with his praises. The endurance, the obedience, the courage of the Japanese soldier and sailor have been shown in marvellous fashion during the great war with Russia, and Japan has fully proved herself to be one of the greatest of the naval and military Powers of the world.

The Japanese soldier is the result of the family life in Japan. From his infancy he is taught that he has

two supreme duties: one of obedience to his parents, the other of service to his country. This unhesitating, unquestioning habit of obedience, a habit which becomes second nature to him, is of immense value to him as a soldier. He is a disciplined man before he enters the ranks, and he transfers at once to his officers the obedience which he has hitherto shown towards the elders of his family.

His second great duty of service to his country also leads him onward towards becoming the perfect soldier. He not only looks upon his life as a thing to be readily risked or given for his Emperor and for Japan, but he strives to make himself a thoroughly capable servant of his land. No detail of his duty is too small for him to overlook, for he fears lest the lack of that detail should prevent him from putting forth his full strength on the day of trial. He cleans a button as carefully as he lays a big gun, and this readiness for any duty, great or small, was a large factor in the wonderful victory of Japan over Russia.

In battle he questions no order. During the late war many Japanese regiments knew that they were being sent to certain death, in order that they might open a way for their comrades. They never flinched. Shouting their "Banzai!"—their Japanese hurrah—the dogged little men rushed forward upon batteries spouting flame and shell, or upon ramparts lined with rifles, and gave their lives freely for Dai Nippon, Great Japan, the country of their birth.

CHAPTER XXI

TWO GREAT FESTIVALS

THERE are two great Japanese festivals of which we have not yet spoken, but which are of the first importance. One is the New Year Festival, the other is the Bon Matsuri, the Feast of the Dead, in the summer. The New Year Festival is the great Japanese holiday of the year. No one does any work for several days, and all devote themselves to making merry. Although this festival comes in the middle of winter, every street looks like an arbour, decorated as it is with arches of greenery before each house. On either side of each door is a pine-tree and bamboo stems. These signify a hardy old age, and they are joined by a grass rope which runs from house to house along the street. This rope is supposed to prevent evil spirits from entering the houses, and so it ensures the occupants a lucky year. Japanese flags are entwined amid the decorations, and green feathery branches and ferns are set about, until the street looks like a forest.

Japanese people are so polite to each other that even the beggars in the streets bow to each other in the most ceremonious fashion, but at this festival the bowing is redoubled. There is a special form of greeting for this occasion, and not a bow is to be missed when two acquaintances meet.

There is much feasting and a great exchange of presents. The Japanese are always making presents to each other, and there is a prescribed way for every rank of life to make presents to every other rank, and for the manner in which the presents are to be received. A present may always be known by the little gold or red or white paper kite fastened to the paper string which ties up the parcel.

Every one enters into the fun of the time, from the highest to the lowest. They call upon each other; they march in great processions; they visit the gayest and liveliest of fairs; they feast; they drink tea and saké almost without ceasing. The fairs look most striking and picturesque after darkness has fallen. Then the streets and the long rows of white booths made of newly-sawn wood and gaily decorated, are lighted up by innumerable lanterns of every colour that paper can be painted, and of every size, from six inches high to six feet. The crowd wear their gayest kimonos, and the moosmes are brilliant in flowered or striped silks and splendid sashes, and the air is full of the rattle of the shuffling clogs and the tinkling samisen played in almost every booth.

At times the crowd opens to let some procession pass through. Now it is the dragon-dancers, the dragon's head being a huge and terrifying affair made of coloured pasteboard, and carried on a pole draped with a long garment which hides the dancer. In front march two men with drum and fife to herald the dragon's approach.

Next comes a batch of coolies dragging a car upon which a swarm of masqueraders present some traditional pageant, and next a number of boys perform an old dance with much spirit and shouting. On New Year's Eve a very curious market is held. It is a custom in Japan for every one to pay all that he owes to his Japanese creditors before the New Year dawns. If he does not do so, he loses his credit. So on the last day of the Old Year the Japanese who is behind in his payments looks among his belongings for something to sell, and carries it to the market in order that he may gain a few sen to settle with his creditor.

In the great city of Tokyo this fair is visited by every traveller. For a space of two miles the stalls stretch along in double rows, lighted by lanterns of oil flares, and here may be seen every imaginable thing which is to be found in poorer Japanese households. As each Japanese arrives with his worldly possessions in a couple of square boxes swinging one at each end of a bamboo pole slung across his shoulder, he takes possession of a little stall or a patch of pavement and sets out his poor wares.

He has brought mats, or cushions, or shabby kimonos, or clogs, or socks, or little ornaments and vessels in porcelain or silver or bronze. Sometimes he brings really beautiful things, the last precious possessions of a family which has come down in the world—a fine piece of embroidery, a priceless bit of lacquer, bronze and silver charms, little boxes of ivory, temples and pagodas

and bell-towers in miniature, tiny but perfect in every detail and of the most exquisite workmanship. Everything comes to market on this night of the year.

The Feast of the Dead takes place in the hot summer weather, and is celebrated in different ways in various parts of Japan. Everywhere the children, in their finest clothes, march through the streets in processions, carrying fans and banners and lanterns, and chanting as they march; but most great cities have their own form of celebration.

At Nagasaki the tombs of all those who have died during the past year are illuminated with large bright lanterns on the first night of the celebrations. On the second and third nights all tombs are illuminated, and the burial-grounds are one glorious blaze of many-coloured lights. The avenues leading to the burial-grounds are turned into fair-grounds, with decorations and booths, stalls and tea-houses, each illuminated by many brilliant lanterns. Fires are lighted on the hills, rockets shoot up on every hand, and vast crowds of people gather in the cemeteries to feast and make merry and drink saké in honour of their ancestors, whose spirits they suppose to surround them and be present at the festival. At the end of the feast a very striking scene takes place: the preparations for the departure of the dead.

"But on the third vigil, suddenly, at about two o'clock in the morning, long processions of bright lanterns are seen to descend from the heights and

group themselves on the shores of the bay, while the mountains gradually return to obscurity and silence. It is fated that the dead should embark and disappear before twilight. The living have plaited them thousands of little ships of straw, each provisioned with some fruit and a few pieces of money. The frail vessels are charged with all the coloured lanterns which were used for the illumination of the cemeteries; the small sails of matting are spread to the wind, and the morning breeze scatters them round the bay, where they are not long in taking fire. It is thus that the entire flotilla is consumed, tracing in all directions large trails of fire. The dead depart rapidly. Soon the last ship has foundered, the last light is extinguished, and the last soul has taken its departure again from earth."

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